

BUSINESS PROFILE

Greyson Properties help families find their own home sweet home

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CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Precisely 24 hours after the last nail has been hammered and the last window installed, local home-builder Joe Greybar stands in silence.

After months of hard work and hours of intense labor, another home is complete. As part of a ritual he calls his "24-hour rule," Greyson walks through the home by himself, carefully and meticulously taking in all that made this house a home.

"I'm always in awe of the talents of the people who can build a house from nothing," said the President of Greyson Properties Inc. "I love every home that we have had a hand in building."

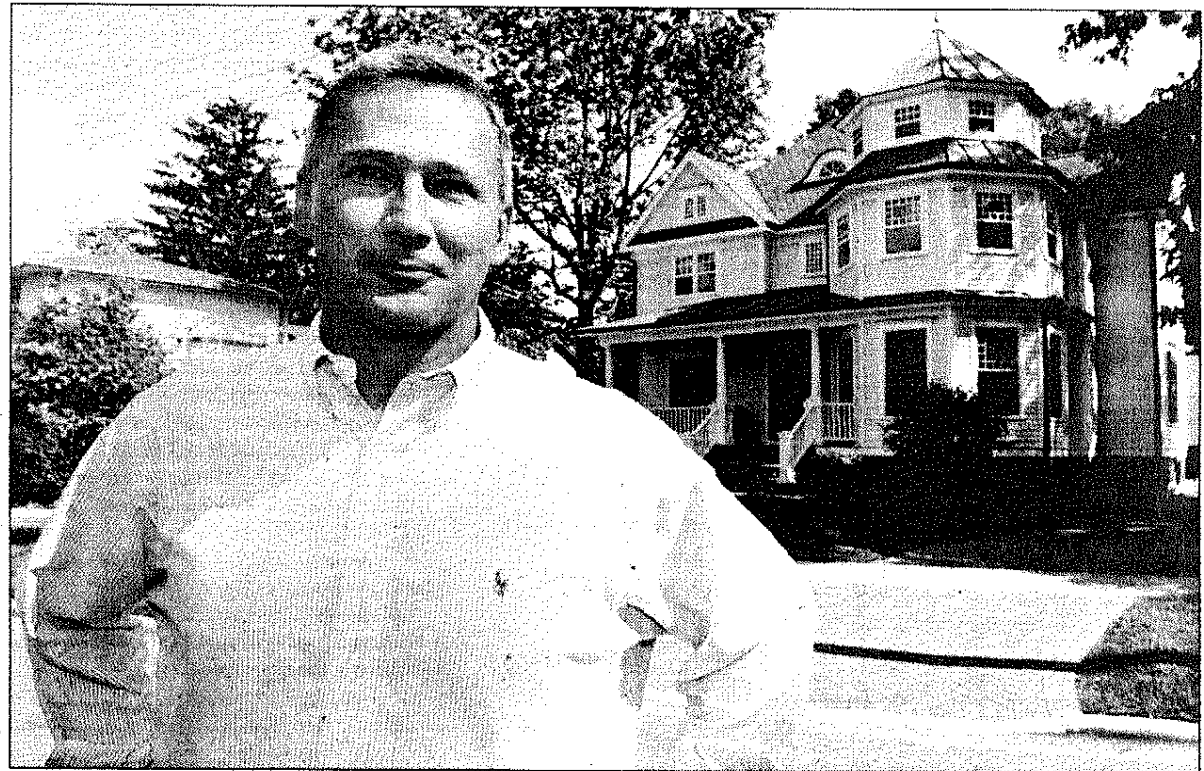
As he walks out the doors of the home for the last time, Greyson realizes it's time to hand over the keys to another customer.

"I realize it's not mine anymore," said Greybar, who resides with his family in Western Springs. "It's exciting to know that someone now gets to live in this and-add all of their own personal touches."

In the past five years, Greyson Properties has completed nearly 50 homes in the area and plans to complete an additional 10 new homes by the end of this year. A majority of Greyson Properties' homes are in the Western Springs area, including the Hinsdale-Burr Ridge-LaGrange corridor.

Every day, on his way home from work, Greybar said he drives by six different homes that he had a hand in building.

"Our customers are our fellow neighbors," Greybar said. "These are the people we see at school and at church and at the grocery store. We are not fearful of seeing them because we know they are satisfied with our work."



Joe Greybar is proud of the homes he builds in neighborhoods throughout the area. (Doings photo by Steve Johnston)

Greyson Properties work with customers from blueprints to a completed home. An initial call can result in a brand new home about a year later.

Yet, Greybar said that they must sometimes limit a customer's expectations.

"Some people walk in here with no plans and no ideas and want to know what it's going to cost them," Greybar said. "We can't put a price on something when we don't know the kind of things they will inside."

Instead, Greybar said he prefers to work with people who have already come up with a set of plans and have a good idea of what they want in a house.

"I can visualize what it will be like to walk through the house simply by looking at the blueprints," he said.

"We can offer our customers those bits of flavor that can take a house from ordinary to exquisite. I also love being able to actually create exterior and interior visions that our customers come to us with."

Nearly all of Greyson's employees are subcontractors who, in turn, employ anywhere from 300-500 people.

"I think the biggest obstacle that any new home builder faces is coming up with the best labor force," Greybar said. "There is always that temptation to go with the lowest bidder, but we know that our reputation will be largely based on the materials that we pick and the labor force we employ."

Besides their custom home building, Greyson Properties also build spec homes in the western suburbs'

most desirable areas. Unlike building a custom home for a particular customer to fulfill their needs and wants, working on spec homes allows Greybar and his team to be a bit more creative.

"I still believe that the climate is favorable for new construction in this area," he said. "Working on spec homes is really the next stage in the expansion of this company. We want to make sure we always capitalize on our reputation."

This reputation has made Greyson Properties a respected homebuilder.

"Building a house isn't about impressing your friends," Greybar said. "It's about coming home from a long day of work and walking into a place that is well balanced and interesting."